

REVIEW

Illustrated Flora of Ferns and Fern Allies of South Pacific Islands, produced by the South Pacific Fern Studies Group of the Nippon Fernist Club, directed by Takehisa Nakamura and Sadamu Matsumoto. Published by the National Museum of Nature and Science as series No.8. Printed by Tokai University Press, 2008. Front matter xxxi pp., text 295 pp. Hard cover. Price: ¥ 8200 (about \$80–\$90 depending on exchange rate) ISBN 978-4-486-0179-2, 16 color plates; 110 black and white plates. Book 7.5 by 10.5 inches. <http://www.press.tokai.ac.jp>; tupcustomer@press.tokai.ac.jp; Fax: 048-432-0381.

The South Pacific islands included in this generously illustrated book are New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji, Samoa, and other nearby Pacific Islands. The book is useful to botanists, students, amateurs, naturalists, and environmental workers who are interested in the flora and nature of this area. The South Pacific Fern Studies Group of the Nippon Fernist Club produced this book under the leadership of Dr. Takehisa Nakamura, former President of the Nippon Fernist Club, and Dr. Sadamu Matsumoto of the Tsukuba Botanical Garden. The Nippon Fernist Club is comprised of botanists, knowledgeable fern enthusiasts and naturalists. The fern families and their genera are treated by various well-known Japanese fern botanists.

Fortunately for those of us who do not read Japanese there are English translations throughout the book, though in some areas they are shortened versions from the Japanese text. The front matter includes maps of the area followed by colored photographs and comments on the geography of the major islands. The photographs show major island terrains and habits of some of their ferns. Following this section are several pages discussing the new classification of ferns adopted in the book. The classification system is mainly adapted from *Smith et al. (2006), A classification for extant ferns. Taxon 55: 705–731.*

Most of the book consists of botanical keys reaching the species level and black and white illustrations. The fern and fern allies of the area are treated family by family with each family and its contents being authored by one or more pteridologist. The family entry is followed by a brief description of the family, its possible diversification pathway, number of species, and comments on its distribution in the area. A botanical key to the genera in the family follows. Each genus is very briefly discussed and followed by a botanical key to the species of the area. Each species is then listed with reference to its diagram and coded information on the specimens collected, studied, diagramed, and the institution where vouchers are deposited. Though one might wish for lengthier descriptions, one is grateful that this work is not a mere checklist without any descriptions, botanical keys, or illustrations. The botanical keys are well constructed, clear, short and easy to use. The botanical terms used in the keys are well known and do not require a very erudite botanist to decipher. Most of the species are illustrated by excellent line

drawings, which will serve as a great help in identifying the ferns. Many of the line drawings are selected to show the diagnostic features of the species and have scale bars as well.

For English readers this book will be a valuable field guide to have when visiting these South Pacific Islands. Additionally the botanist who needs to work on ferns from this area will find careful documentation of specimens used in producing this work, a brief botanical history of the area and an extensive bibliography on South Pacific pteridophytes.

As with most bilingual books, particularly where the written languages are very different, there are typographical and other errors. However, these are relatively small distractions considering the value of having such a fern treatment on this area. We are indebt to the organizers of this team effort, Dr. Takehisa Nakamura and Dr. Sadamu Matsumoto, in producing this book and making it available to the English reading public as well.—BARBARA JOE HOSHIZAKI, 557 N. Westmoreland Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90004-2210.